SUPERMAN
ACTION COMICS

795
NOV.02

ENDING BATTLE
PART 4 OF 8

THE RETURN OF THE ELITE...
'NUFF DEAD!

KELLY • ROULEAU • ALQUIZA

WE REMEMBER 9-11
SEPT 11 2001

DIRECT SALES
79511
61941 20001
$2.25 US $3.75 CAN

ALL UNITS, THIS IS A *LEVEL 1 PROTOCOL BREACH.* *CUEBALL* IS *OFF* THE TABLE.

I NEED A TWENTY ON *FARMER JOHN.*

FARMER JOHN IS SECURE, SIR. *CONGRESS* HAS BEEN LOCKED DOWN SINCE THE ATTACK. *METROPOLIS BRANCH* IS ALSO ON THE MOVE, IN CASE WE'RE LOOKING AT A *REPEAT* --

WE'RE *NOT.* THE *VEEP* HAS NO CLUE?

THE THIRTEENTH HOUR

NONE, SIR. I THINK HE'S JUST RELIEVED TO HAVE MADE IT PAST *MASTER JAILER* WITH THE *MISSUS* INTACT.

HE'S GOING TO RE-CLENCH IN ABOUT AN *HOUR.*

WHY'S THAT, SIR?

BECAUSE IF SOMEONE DOESN'T POCKET *CUEBALL* BY THEN...

...*FARM BOY* GETS FULL EXECUTIVE PRIVILEGES AND BECOMES THE *PRESIDENT* OF THE *UNITED STATES.*

ACTION COMICS 795. November, 2002. Published monthly by DC Comics, 1700 Broadway, New York, NY 10019. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to ACTION COMICS, DC Comics Subscriptions, PO. Box 0528, Baldwin, NY 11510. Annual subscription rate $27.00. Canadian subscribers must add $12.00 for postage and GST. GST # is R125921072. All foreign countries must add $12.00 for postage. U.S. funds only. Copyright © 2002 DC Comics. All Rights Reserved. All characters featured in this issue, the distinctive likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of DC Comics. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. Printed on recyclable paper. DC Comics does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories or artwork.

Printed in Canada.

DC Comics, A division of Warner Bros.—An AOL Time Warner Company

• JENETTE KAHN, President & Editor-in-Chief • PAUL LEVITZ, Executive Vice President & Publisher • MIKE CARLIN, VP-Executive Editor •
• EDDIE BERGANZA, Editor • TOM PALMER, JR., Associate Editor • GEORG BREWER, VP-Design & Retail Product Development •
• RICHARD BRUNING, VP-Creative Director • PATRICK CALDON, Senior VP-Finance & Operations • TERRI CUNNINGHAM, VP-Managing Editor •
• DAN DIDIO, VP-Editorial • JOEL EHRLICH, Senior VP-Advertising & Promotions • ALISON GILL, VP-Manufacturing •
• LILLIAN LASERSON, VP & General Counsel • JIM LEE, Editorial Director-WildStorm • DAVID McKILLIPS, VP-Advertising •
• JOHN NEE, VP-Business Development • CHERYL RUBIN, VP-Licensing & Merchandising • BOB WAYNE, VP-Sales & Marketing •

WELL...

ENDING BATTLE
PART 4

JOE KELLY
writer

DUNCAN ROULEAU
penciller

MARLO ALQUIZA
inker

MOOSE BAUMANN
colorist

COMICRAFT
letters

TOM PALMER Jr.
associate editor

EDDIE BERGANZA
editor

...HERE WE ARE.

AND HERE WE GO.

SUPERMAN created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

I KNOW THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TRACKING DEVICES ON ME, AND MY TELEPORTER IS UNTRACEABLE...

IT'S THE HEARTBEAT, ISN'T IT? YOU MEMORIZED MY HEARTBEAT.

...

CONGRATULATIONS. YOU ARE THE FIRST AND LAST VISITOR TO MY "SECRET LAIR." MY RETREAT. LUTHOR'S "ISLAND OF SOLITUDE."

THE FOOD AT CAMP DAVID IS TERRIBLE, AND THERE'S NO ROOM TO PARK THE LEXWING.

AFTER TODAY, I'LL DESTROY IT, SO DON'T BOTHER LOOKING HERE FOR ME NEXT TIME.

IT'S FITTING THAT YOU'D BE THE ONLY ONE EVER TO SEE IT BESIDES ME. QUID PRO QUO IN A SMALL WAY, YES?

SO YOU KNOW?

KNOW WHAT? I WANT TO HEAR YOU SAY THE WORDS. PLEASE, HUMOR ME.

DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?

YES, CLARK. I KNOW.

LEX

:SNICKER:

I'M SORRY... I'M SORRY.
"CLARK" WHILE YOU'RE WEARING THAT COSTUME. DOESN'T IT SOUND FUNNY TO YOU?

...
NO, I SUPPOSE IT WOULDN'T.
IT'S ALL THE SAME TO YOU. ISN'T IT? EXPOSED OR NOT, GLASSES ON OR OFF, YOU'RE THE SAME MAN...
...
I DIDN'T DO IT.

RIGHT. I'M SUPPOSED TO BELIEVE *YOU*.

I KNOW YOUR *SECRET*, BUT I AM *NOT* RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOU NOW.

THE *HUNTING* OF YOUR ACQUAINTANCES.

I WISH I WAS. IT'S QUITE *THE COUP*, FAR AS I CAN TELL.

ANYONE WHO'S EVER *SPOKEN* TO CLARK KENT IS IN *DANGER*. THIS ISN'T A *JOKE*.

RIGHT.

YOU HAVE THE *MEANS* TO SEND THESE *IDIOTS* OUT AFTER MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY. THE *SKILL* AND YOU ADMIT YOU HAVE THE *KNOWLEDGE*.

"IF IT SLITHERS LIKE A SNAKE AND HISSES LIKE ONE..." I KNOW. BUT AGAIN, IT WAS NOT ME.

I WAS *GIVEN* THE INFORMATION --

YOU MEAN YOU *FOUND* THE INFORMATION.

-UURK

I'M TRYING TO KEEP THIS *CIVIL*. DON'T *RUIN IT*.

YOUR *IDENTITY* WAS *GIVEN* TO ME. ON A *PLATTER*. A MYSTERIOUS *FILE*. A NAIVE *EMPLOYEE*. NO *WITNESSES* --

BY *WHO*?

I HAVE MY *THEORIES*.

SO YOU'RE SAYING YOU *KNEW* MY SECRET, BUT HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING ABOUT IT?

I DIDN'T LOOK A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH... BUT I HAVE NOT DONE *THIS*. I REFUSE TO BE A *PAWN*.

WE'RE *ABOVE GAMES*... DON'T YOU THINK?

...

WHY ARE WE HAVING THIS DISCUSSION? LIKE THIS? WHY...

...WHY ARE WE *TALKING*?

...

I HAVE A FEELING... THAT THERE IS A *CHANGE* COMING. CHANGE THAT WILL *UNDO*... WHAT WE ARE NOW.

IT HAPPENS IN ALL *RELATIONSHIPS*, WHICH, LIKE IT OR NOT, WE HAPPEN TO HAVE.

CALL IT PESSIMISM — *OPTIMISM* — BUT I FEEL IN MY BONES THAT A YEAR FROM NOW... *NOTHING* WILL BE THE SAME.

AND FOR REASONS I CAN'T EXPLAIN, I'M FEELING *NOSTALGIC* ABOUT IT.

AND *THAT'S* WHY YOU HAVEN'T EXPLOITED THE KNOWLEDGE THAT I'M CLARK KENT? *NOSTALGIA?*

NOT ENTIRELY... THERE ARE ONLY THREE THINGS I HAVE EVER LOVED IN THIS LIFE, CLARK.

MYSELF, OF COURSE, FIRST AND FOREMOST.

THEN *MY DAUGHTER*, CONTRARY TO WHAT YOU BELIEVE...

...AND THEN SOMEONE... *ELSE*.

SOMEONE, WHO ABOVE ALL, I DO NOT ENJOY TO SEE *HURT*. SOMEONE I CAN NEVER HAVE.

IF *ANYTHING* HAS EVER PROTECTED YOU FROM ME... *CLARK*...

...IT IS *THAT WOMAN*.

LOIS.

LUTHOR...

SEE? THINGS ARE DIFFERENT BETWEEN US ALREADY. I WAS *RIGHT*.

SHAZAM

NNNGH

MOVE!

GO! I'LL HOLD IT — NNGH

F-FOR ALL I NOW KNOW... YOU STILL SAVE MY LIFE.

YOU TRULY ARE AN IDIOT.

HOPE YOU AIN'T TALKIN' TO *ME.*

YOU *MISSED,* 'CAST.

CALL IT *FOREPLAY,* HAT.

MISTER PRESIDENT. SO NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN. EVER HANG WITH A DUDE NAMED *"KENT"?*

THE *ELITE.* SO... IT *IS* YOU, *"MATE."* SO NICE OF YOU TO *SIGN* IT FOR H.M

chaos

I THOUGHT YOU SAID HE'D BE *ALONE* OUT HERE.

SUPPOSED TO BE. BUT IF HE AIN'T, DOES IT *MATTER?*

YOU TELL ME.

AAAAAAAAAAH!

NOT HIM! NOT HIM!

OH MY GOD.

STAY COOL.

IT ISN'T US! THIS ISN'T US!

NO! MENAGERIE --! PAM, DON'T!

TELL ME, PAM --

SHUT UP!

BEHIND

ME.

WOW

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! HE CAN *HELP US* OUT OF THIS! YOU *KNOW* HE CAN!

HAVE YOU GONE *STUPID, GIRL?!*

THERE'S NOTHING HE CAN DO! SHUT UP AND DO THE JOB!

HE CAN! HE'S —! I'M GOING TO TELL HIM! I'M TELLING HIM AND YOU CAN'T —

GCHLGH. GRT

PAM!

GET OFF OF HER

WHATEVER'S WRONG WITH HER, IF YOU *FIGHT ME NOW*, SHE WON'T GET *HELP*.

GCCHL HGGKL

I BET YOU'RE *LAUGHING* AT THIS SOMEWHERE. AREN'T YOU, YOU SICK —

GOD...

THERE'S NO HELPING HER. NOT BY *YOU*. YOU ALREADY KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HER.

MOVE.

SHALL I HAZARD A GUESS? ANEURYSM?

CLOSE. MORE LIKE A *STROKE*. A *PINCH* ON JUST THE RIGHT BLOOD VESSEL IN THE BRAIN.

IT'S A LIVING NIGHTMARE.

YOU SOUND LIKE AN *EXPERT* ON THE SUBJECT, SUPERMAN.

I AM.

COLDCAST. WHERE IS *HE?*

IT'S *OVER.* IT'S OVER. I DON'T WANT TO DO THIS FOR *HIM* --

-- BUT I'M NOT *DYIN'* EITHER. NOT BEIN' NO DAMN VEGETABLE.

I WANTED TO *BE YOU* AT ONE POINT. YOU KNOW THAT?

GO LOOK FOR HIM, BUT IT WON'T MATTER. HE'LL FIND *YOU,* WHEN HE WANTS TO. WHEN HE DOES...

...DO THE RIGHT THING FOR ONCE.

KILL HIM.

...

I TAKE IT YOU CAN SAFELY TELEPORT HOME, MISTER PRESIDENT?

WITH AN EYEBLINK. BUT I WANTED TO SEE IF I WAS *RIGHT.*

GOOD LUCK...

SUPERMAN.

OUT ON THE OPEN OCEAN, THE SCENT OF *HUMAN FEAR* IS PARTICULARLY EASY TO TRACK. IT TAKES THREE MINUTES TO FOLLOW *THE HAT* A HUNDRED MILES. .

...HERE TO *"BUNNY,"* A LIVING SHIP FROM IN-BETWEEN DIMENSIONS AN ORGANISM I *THOUGHT* HAD BEEN SET FREE.

OF COURSE I ALSO THOUGHT *THE ELITE* WERE STILL IMPRISONED BY THE *U.S. GOVERNMENT*. THE DAY KEEPS GETTING *BETTER*.

MY HEAD IS *SPINNING*. IF IT WERE POSSIBLE, I'D THINK I'D BE *SICK* OUT HERE. TROUBLE IS, I'M NOT SURE FROM *WHAT*, EXACTLY

THE REALIZATION OF WHO MY ATTACKER IS. ?

THE *VIOLENCE* HE'S VISITED ON HIS *OWN PEOPLE*, AS WELL AS HIS INFILTRATION INTO MY PERSONAL LIFE...?

-- HFFRNT -- LGLL --

OR LUTHOR...?

-- GCHHK -- CLARKK-CH... K-KENT --

WHO THE HELL IS CLARK KENT — GHH!

I'M BAFFLED BY THE SHEER *EGO* OF THIS. THE *AUDACITY* OF ROUNDING UP A SMALL ARMY OF METAHUMANS TO PICK APART MY LIFE A RELATION AT A TIME, REGARDLESS OF HOW SMALL.

BUT USING THE *ELITE* TO TAKE OUT THE PRESIDENT SEALED IT.

HE *WANTS* ME TO KNOW THAT I'M BEING *PLAYED*. HE HOPES MY CURIOSITY WILL DRIVE ME DEEPER INTO HIS *GAME*...

. AND IT *DOES*, BUT NOT BECAUSE I CARE FOR *GAMES*, BUT BECAUSE I CAN'T *BELIEVE* IT'S *HIM*.

WHERE ARE YOU? WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO FIND HERE?

THIS WAS THE BRIG, IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T GUESSED. AN INTERDIMENSIONAL PRISON

I CAN TELL YOU FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE THAT UNDER THE STEWARDSHIP OF THE ELITE...

BOOM

... "HELL" DOES NOT BEGIN TO APPROXIMATE THE SUFFERING THAT TRANSPIRED HERE TO MYSELF AND THE OTHERS.

THEY CALLED ME A "RAPIST." A RAPIST OF MACHINES... AND THEY TREATED ME LIKE ONE

BUT THAT WHICH DOESN'T KILL ME... FUELS ME.

CYBORG

THEN, WHEN THE FUNNY ONE DECIDED TO SET US ALL FREE, HE OFFERED ME HIS SHIP. TOLD ME SHE HAD BEEN BAD.

THEY WERE RIGHT ABOUT ME, OF COURSE.

HE DOESN'T LIKE YOU VERY MUCH... THE FUNNY ONE.

CHUNG

HE MIGHT EVEN HATE YOU AS MUCH AS I DO.

THOUGH THE PROBABILITY OF THAT BEING TRUE IS INFINITESIMAL

HOW MANY TIMES... *ANNGH* — HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO *STOP* YOU?

ONE. JUST ONE...

BUT YOU HAVEN'T YET. HAVE YOU?

THE DAY'S STILL — *ARRGH!*

HE OFFERED ME LIFE BACK, YOU KNOW... YOUR LIFE, IF I COULD TURN THIS SHIP AGAINST YOU AND FINISH YOU.

HE WAS **SPECIFIC** ABOUT USING THE **SHIP** WHERE I HAD BEEN HELD THESE LAST FEW MONTHS.

THE SHIP YOU **BEFRIENDED.**

ARE ALL OF YOUR FRIENDS DYING, SUPERMAN?

IF SO... I'M NOT SURE I WANT YOUR LIFE ANYMORE.

ONLY YOUR DEATH.

"OTHERS." YOU SAID THERE WERE *OTHERS* IN THIS SHIP — *WHO?!*

YOU'LL NEVER KNOW. I CAN DO THIS **FOREVER**, AND EVENTUALLY, **YOU** WILL TIRE.

YOU'RE ALREADY TWENTY **MILES DEEPER** INTO THE SHIP THAN WHEN YOU STARTED...

MAKE THAT **FORTY**. I CAN FOLD BUNNY BACK IN ON HERSELF INDEFINITELY, A TECHNORGANIC MOEBIUS STRIP.

WE'RE GOING TO BE AT THIS FOR A **VERY, VERY** LONG TIME.

RUNNING? SO SOON? I DIDN'T EXPECT **FUTILITY** OUT OF YOU UNTIL AFTER THE FIRST FEW YEARS.

NO. NOT RUNNING.

FINISHING.

YOU HAVE NOWHERE LEFT TO ***JUMP*** OUT HERE. NO OTHER MACHINES TO ***POSSESS.***

THE HUSK OF THIS SHIP YOU ***KILLED*** IS ***NOT*** A PRISON FOR ***ME...***

...BUT IT IS FOR ***YOU.***

NOT POSSIBLE. SIMPLY -- NNGH!

THIS... THIS IS NOT WHAT HE PROMISED.

THIS BODY WAS MINE... SHE...

I USED TO BE... GREATER THAN... THIS.

I'M COMING FOR YOU, MANCHESTER BLACK.

I'M COMING FOR YOU.

JK & DR & MA

To Be Continued